

Barnegat Peninsula Communities
New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail
Along State Route 35 on Barnegat Peninsula,
South of Point Pleasant
Seaside Heights Vicinity
Ocean County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-1013

HABS
NJ
15-SEHG
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
BARNEGAT PENINSULA COMMUNITIES

HABS No. NJ-1013

Location: Including Bay Head, Chadwick, Lavallette, Mantoloking, Normandy Beach, Ocean Beach, Ortley Beach, Seaside Heights, Seaside Park, and South Seaside Park. New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, Along State Route 35 on Barnegat Peninsula, South of Point Pleasant, Barnegat Peninsula, Ocean County, New Jersey.

Significance: The Barnegat Peninsula, seen as ideal resort property, was developed in the 1880s as a result of the increased accessibility made possible by the railroad. The resorts on the peninsula vary widely, from elite, and exclusive communities such as Bay Head and Mantoloking, to more affordable and inclusive resorts such as Ocean Beach, and the amusement-based resort of Seaside Heights. The town of Seaside Park, now virtually a suburb of Seaside Heights, originated as a Baptist camp meeting, established during the post Civil-War revival of Christian enthusiasm for rustic retreats.

History: The Barnegat Peninsula and Island Beach both refer to the barrier reef that reaches from Point Pleasant south to Barnegat Inlet. There is a sharp contrast between the intensely developed north half of the area--a sea of traffic, pavement, power lines, low-rise strip development, and row upon row of houses--and the south half, preserved long enough into the twentieth century to be acquired by New Jersey and opened as Island Beach State Park in 1959.¹ Today one finds there an unspoiled New Jersey shore, probably much like the one Lenni Lenape Indians knew before Europeans came. The Atlantic beaches stretch to the north and south horizons, unmarred by rock jetties, piers, and other man-made interventions. Back from the shore are sand dunes, covered with grasses adapted to desert conditions. Further still are holly bushes, beach plums, and bayberry. Stark and wind whipped, the park illustrates the beauty that spurred development of the communities to the north--Bay Head, Mantoloking, Normandy, Chadwick and Ocean Beach, Lavallette, Ortley Beach, Seaside Heights, and Seaside Park. "The beaches seem to offer delightful sites for summer settlements,"² Kobbe declared in 1889, when only a handful of people came here.

By the 1880s the influence of railroad entrepreneurs reached the Barnegat Peninsula, building railways running much of its length, linking it to the mainland at Point Pleasant to the north, and from Seaside Park via trestle eastward to Coates Point at the mouth of the Toms River. Anticipating the construction of Central Railroad tracks across the river, businessmen built the Ocean House along the single road to Point Pleasant Beach. Captain John Arnold illustrated his faith in the railroad by founding the village of Mantoloking. Bay Head, just south of the point, also became an attractive resort possibility during the 1880s. Though the Central Railroad hesitated to push forward,

¹ Island Beach State Park, brochure (Trenton, N.J.: New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry, ca. 1990).

² Gustav Kobbe, The New Jersey Coast and Pines (Short Hills: By the author, 1889; reprint, Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1977), 62.

possibly because of the problems its New York and Long Branch line suffered along the narrow Sea Bright Peninsula, it was encouraged by the establishment of a Pennsylvania Railroad line. In 1880, a group of visionary Philadelphians convinced of the resort's financial potential supported the railroad company's line from Pemberton to the shore.³ Roads were built, with bridges to the mainland, and in the twentieth century new hamlets have filled every inch of land among the towns and even crept out onto Barnegat Bay islands that barely rise above the water line. In the process the natural landscape that inspired settlement was, ironically, wiped away.

Bay Head

Bay Head, at the head of Barnegat Bay, was founded by three Princeton bankers--Edward Howe, William Harris, and David Mount--who "rode into town on a summer day in 1877," finding dunes, tall grasses, a pond, the bay, bushes, meadows, marshes, and "the smell of the sea."⁴ By October they had purchased their first forty-five acres from Captain Elijah Chadwick, and within two years they founded the Bay Head Land Company. By 1882, the Bellevue hotel, the first of five big hotels, was hosting guests, and a seawall protected "new houses being rapidly built."⁵ The New York and Long Branch Railroad had been extended from Manasquan on the north, and the Pennsylvania opened its line from Seaside Park, which connected via trestle to the mainland. Early commentators noted the contrast between "weatherbeaten, brown-stained shingle" beach houses nestled among the dunes and more elaborate summer residences away from the beach.⁶

With lots sold under deeds prohibiting everything from beer to slaughterhouses,⁷ Bay Head managed to attract the genteel clientele desired, such as Princeton University faculty, as well as peers of the founding bankers. Evidence of this is still visible today, both in street names that remember Princeton professors and presidents, and rows of well-preserved houses. "Houses at Deal and Elberon or Margate may be bigger and brighter and more costly," says one Jersey shore chronicler, "but the Bay Head-Mantoloking homes, set comfortably in reasonably well-preserved dunes, are like the seaside 'cottages' in old Harper's magazine etchings. There is unshowy evidence of wealth, of conservatism--the expensive 'natural' look, the 'Ivy League' look, so to speak."⁸ The

³ June Methot, Up and Down the Beach (Navesink, NJ: Whip Publishers, 1988), 109.

⁴ William Schoettle, Bay Head: 1879-1911 (Bay Head, N.J., 1966), 13.

⁵ Edwin Salter, A History of Monmouth and Ocean Counties (Bayonne, N.J.: E. Gardner & Son, 1890; reprint, Ocean County N.J.: Ocean County Historical Society, n.d.), 286.

⁶ Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, New Jersey: A Guide to its Present and Past (New York: Public Library of Newark and New Jersey Guild Associates, Viking Press, 1939), 647.

⁷ Dick LaBonte, In Old Bay Head (Bay Head N.J., 1986), 6.

⁸ John T. Cunningham, The New Jersey Shore (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, 1958), 78-80.

community is still "well known for its large summer homes."⁹ John Dos Passos, who set part of his novel 1919 in Bay Head, reflected on a visit there in a 1918 diary entry: "Could anything be stranger than the contrast between Bay Head--the little square houses in rows, the drugstores, the boardwalks, the gawky angular smiling existence of an American summer resort--and my life for the last year. Hurrah for contrast."¹⁰

In Bayhead several stores and Applegate's garage were opened to serve the locals, but no substantial business district developed, with residents relying on Point Pleasant to the north for staples. From 1903 to 1919 Point Pleasant was connected to Bay Head by a streetcar that ran only in summer.¹¹ Despite pretensions and regulations, however, some industries prospered, one principal example being boat building. Benjamin Hance first opened a boatyard in 1878. Morton and Hubert Johnson became internationally renowned boat builders, particularly known for their Barnegat sneak boxes.¹² During World War II, the Bay Head yards produced boats for the army and navy.¹³ A monument to the rise of pleasure boating and yacht racing after the Civil War can be found in the Bay Head Yacht Club on Metcalf Street, a shingled building with Colonial Revival details. In the 1930s Bay Head was identified as the "starting point" for Saturday boat races; the Bay Head Yacht Club continues the sporting tradition with various activities throughout the season.¹⁴

Meanwhile, old photos are all that testify to Bay Head's participation, as a spectator, in the closing days of the age of the dirigible. Bay Headers photographed the German Zeppelin "Hindenberg" above the seaside town while it waited out a storm at Lakehurst Naval Air Station on May 6, 1937, where it would crash that evening.¹⁵

The self-imposed aura of exclusiveness still surrounding Bay Head today is highlighted by the battle over beach badges staged by local residents. Originally, the Bay Head Improvement Company sold badges only to Bay Head residents. After a court challenge leveled by unhappy Point Pleasant and Bricktown beachgoers, the company was forced to open paid beach privileges to all. The resentment lingered on, however, as the Bay Head group maintained control of parking, and protected the sidewalks and lawns in front

⁹ "Ocean County Yearbook," 17.

¹⁰ Townsend Ludington, ed., The Fourteenth Chronicle: Letters and Diaries of John Dos Passos, (Boston: Gambit, 1973), 207.

¹¹ Corinne Murphy Hill, "The History of Bay Head," Coast Magazine (December, 1989), 31.

¹² Cunningham, 78.

¹³ Hill, 31.

¹⁴ Federal Writers Project, 647.

¹⁵ LaBonte, 49.

of their large houses from unwanted traffic.¹⁶ Despite significant development, in some ways Bay Head lives up to its 1890 reputation as the place that "holds the key of the mainland at the northernmost extremity of Barnegat Bay."¹⁷

Mantoloking

Just south of Bay Head on the peninsula, developers from New York were busy creating a new resort called Mantoloking in 1881. Though lots were surveyed and even sold from New York beginning around 1875, extensive growth occurred in the 1880s, when the Seashore Land and the Seashore Improvement Companies, organized by sea captain John Arnold, began serious work.¹⁸ From the beginning, the intention was to develop a resort based on ownership rather than lodging. While Bay Head developers utilized the area's natural features to promote their situation, Mantoloking's founders hoped to attract wealthy buyers with a new and "improved" landscape, importing topsoil in order to create luxurious lawns.¹⁹ The historian Salter remarked "the grading and complete laying over of the entire beach with heavy fertile inland soil may be mentioned," implying that such landscaping was unusual.²⁰ Contemporary historians suggest that the resulting lawns may have inspired the Mantoloking Golf and Yacht Club in 1896.²¹ Today, both the golf and an earlier 1887 tennis club have been subsumed by the yacht club.

Like Bay Head and Deal, Mantoloking is mostly large homes and little provision has been made for any form of public entertainment. Rather than locate a public boardwalk or a street directly on the ocean, as in more populist beach communities like Ocean Grove, the choicest lots were fronted to give privileged buyers the beach and view all to themselves. The large number of shingled mansions still standing, such as 1237 Ocean Ave., testify to the success of this formula. Some people built cottages complete with carriage houses, as at 1233 Bay Ave.²² Truly a summer resort for the wealthy, Mantoloking disdains from partaking in the tourist trade; visitors must travel elsewhere to find restaurants and hotel accommodations.²³

¹⁶ Robert Santelli, The Jersey Shore: A Travel and Pleasure Guide (Charlotte, N.C.: Fast & McMillan Publishers, 1986), 91.

¹⁷ Salter, 285-6.

¹⁸ Kevin McGorty, et al, Ocean County Historic Sites Survey (Toms River: Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission, 1981), 2.

¹⁹ Cunningham, 78.

²⁰ Salter, 286.

²¹ McGorty, 3.

²² Eleanor Angott, "Mantoloking Structures Recorded for Eligibility as Historic Sites," The Review (Seaside Heights, NJ, July 29, 1982), 15.

²³ Robert Santelli, The Jersey Shore: A Travel and Pleasure Guide (Charlotte, N.C.: Fast & McMillan Publishers, 1986), 92.

Population figures reveal that Mantoloking was traditionally almost exclusively a summer community. When it became a borough in 1920, only thirty-seven people presided over this splendor on a all year-round basis;²⁴ by the 1930s there were 250 year-round residents, four times that in summer.²⁵ Some of the permanent population were likely Scandinavian fishermen and their families who worked at one of the few local fisheries to survive into the late twentieth century, harvesting tuna, swordfish, bluefish or weakfish.²⁶ Scandinavian influences are found in the design of St. Simon's By the Sea Episcopal Church on Ocean Avenue.²⁷ Other year-round residents were likely been workers in a shipyard that developed on the Barnegat Bay side at Herbert Street, where a causeway was constructed onto Mantoloking Neck.²⁸ More representative of Mantoloking's desired social position were the sneak boxes and other racing boats owned by members of the Barnegat Racing Association, housed here. Among survivors from this era is the Mantoloking Yacht Club, a cottage designed by New York architect Henry C. Pelton, in 1900 on the bay at Downer Avenue.²⁹

By the 1930s, the automobile was eroding Mantoloking's exclusiveness; it was another stop for gas along the shore. Green lawns were giving way to yellow New Jersey gravel.³⁰ Today, although more suburban, year-round homes have sprung up, one current guidebook still describes Mantoloking as an elite and restrictive community. "Driving south on Route 25 through Mantoloking, you can't help but be awed by the magnificent homes that sit majestically overlooking the ocean and bay. The beaches are beautiful in Mantoloking, but the parking regulations are even more restrictive than in Bay Head. If you don't have a driveway in which to park, you're pretty much out of luck."³¹

Normandy Beach and Chadwick

Normandy Beach and Chadwick lie east of Route 35 on Barnegat Bay. These hamlets are technically in Brick and Dover townships, on the mainland, but function as extensions of Mantoloking from the north and Lavallette from the south. The latter is the oldest settlement on the peninsula, founded ca. 1830 by Captain Elijah Chadwick (an original landowner in Bay Head) who entertained friends at the "famous old-fashioned gunning

²⁴ Harold Wilson, The Jersey Shore three vols (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1953), 133.

²⁵ Federal Writers' Project, 647.

²⁶ Federal Writers' Project (revised edition, 1977), 578.

²⁷ Angott, "Mantoloking Structures," 15.

²⁸ Federal Writers' Project, 648.

²⁹ Angott, "Mantoloking Structures," 15.

³⁰ Federal Writers' Project, 647.

³¹ Santelli, 79.

resort."³² For years fishing nets were stretched out on the dunes to be repaired. By the 1930s, "there was no stretch of empty land," and today these places are entirely engulfed in development.³³

Ocean Beach

In contrast to the cultivated ambience of Mantoloking, the little towns filling the peninsula down to Seaside Heights offer more casual summer pleasures. Modern development has resulted in a blending of the communities between ocean and bay, and leveled out distinguishing characteristics. This part of the peninsula is packed with identical cottages arranged in tight rows right up to the dunes. Only the house numbers and alternating colors distinguish between the tiny "modular" homes. Devoid of landscaping, these summer cottages thrive in a sandy beige and bleached-white gravel environment. The place is almost as alienating to visitors as Mantoloking or Deal, and parking places are equally difficult to find. Still, numerous tourists obviously enjoy spending the summer near the beach, regardless of the narrow alley-like "streets" between cottages and the crowded living conditions.

Ocean Beach stands in sharp contrast to the surrounding Victorian Jersey shore resorts. Built after World War II, it is a Levittown-by-the-sea, a city of more than 1,500 identical one-story, square, gable-roof cottages, closely packed along a dense grid of streets named after fish, birds, and nautical landmarks. Straddling Route 35, whose separate north- and south-bound lanes bisect the peninsula a block apart along much of its length, Ocean Beach announces itself not with a view of water or sand but an overhead net of electric lines, strung above the low cottages to meet their need for power. The cottages sit on dry gravel-covered lots, with just enough room to park a car between them, causing the owners themselves to refer to the buildings as "shacks."³⁴

Yet this is a place where dreams have come true, and herein Ocean Beach earns its significance as an American landmark, an icon of its time. "You could have a house at the shore, and it didn't cost a fortune," an Island Beach historian, William Greger, told a Philadelphia reporter in 1982. One could buy the \$2,500 houses for as little as \$10 down in 1948, when the project was launched by a real estate salesman, Edward J. Patnaude. On an area one-mile long and one-half mile wide, dunes were leveled and flora and fauna cleared. In all, more than 1,500 lots sold, divided into three "units," with each lot having one standardized 20' x 22' home. The cottages were set on concrete pads and came unfinished except for a coat of exterior wood stain. But what they lacked in aesthetic beauty and amenities they made up for in sense of neighborhood, residents reported.³⁵ And, hidden from view by a ridge at the end of the long east-west streets,

³² Kobbe, 62.

³³ Federal Writers' Project, 648.

³⁴ Marc Duvoisin, "Crowded together, They Find Ocean Beach Soothing," Philadelphia Inquirer (August 29, 1982), 4B.

³⁵ Duvoisin.

lay an amenity valued as much for simply being there, as for being useful--the ocean. Modest as Ocean Beach was, it had some pretensions. The sense of proprietorship extended to the streets and beach, which were owned in common, declared private, and patrolled to keep intruders out.

In retrospect, Ocean Beach, part of Dover Township on the mainland, can be seen as representing the cutting edge of a new era in American life and culture, worlds apart from the seashore's Victorian history. When rail service ended on Island Beach in the 1940s, it had little negative affect, since cars were already plentiful and preferred, gas was cheap, and roads were free. Elsewhere this marriage would make possible suburbs and suburban strips more substantial than Ocean Beach and a lifestyle that, on varying scales, would exceed Ocean Beach in uniformity.

Lavallette

Lavallette's history parallels that of Mantoloking and Bay Head farther north, in that it was created by a land "improvement" company in the 1880s and prospered with the coming of the railroad. It also benefitted from a growth of leisure time in America among the classes to whom it catered, such as doctors, lawyers, and successful business men who, by the 1880s, could afford to buy or build summer homes and take the leisure time to spend at them.³⁶ The town grew around a small commercial center, several churches and a promenade-type boardwalk, one of the oldest in the state. Surrounded by smaller settlements such as Chadwick, Ocean and Normandy Beach to the north and Otley Beach to the south, Lavallette is distinguished by its downtown district, with wide streets and several brick municipal buildings. Among local builders were Captain McCormick³⁷ as well as Peter Bloom, who advertised himself as a "pioneer carpenter and builder" in 1937.³⁸

Fire and demolition have destroyed many early buildings, and the automobile has brought a worn appearance to Grand Central Avenue, the main street. "There is little if any discernible concern for preservation in the town," says the assessment of Lavallette in the New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory of Ocean County. Regardless, along Grand Central Avenue much of old Lavallette remains, including the Lavallette Hotel, and the Lavallette Theater to the south, whose 1930s stucco alterations suggest an effort to streamline and modernize.³⁹ Among the more interesting newer structures is a 1947 corrugated-metal building built to provide extra space to St. Bonaventure Catholic church on the southwest corner of Washington and Grand Central avenues. Known as quonset huts, this building type was developed during World War II, utilizing inexpensive materials as well as fast

³⁶ David Kadeg, "Lavallette--90 in 1977," The Review (Seaside Heights, N.J., February 12, 1976), 7420.

³⁷ Eleanor Angott, "Lavallette Boasts Number of Architectural and Historical Sites", The Review (Seaside Heights, N.J.: August 5, 1982), 16.

³⁸ Peter Bloom, "Lavallette's Fifty Years of Progress," Supplement, Ocean County Review (July 30, 1937), 18.

³⁹ McGorty, 1, 9.

and easy construction techniques.⁴⁰ In contrast, on the opposite corner is the 1887 Lavallette Union Church, sheathed in dark shingles like the many two-and-one-half story vernacular houses along Lavallette's streets.

One block south of Union Church a Ben Franklin store occupies what was once the Washington General Store and, for a time in the 1920s, a private home.⁴¹ It remains a classic five-and-dime, a type that is slowly disappearing across America. On the opposite side of the street is the Lavallette Boro Hall, built of yellow brick in the 1920s with Colonial Revival details, and altered in the 1980s with a new stucco facade and point added to the front flat roof. The Lavallette Yacht Club, at Swan Point on the Barnegat Bay side, has been moved three times and rebuilt, the last time in 1937.⁴²

There is little history of industry in Lavallette, other than a 1930s boatworks owned by Charles Hankins, which produced sneak boxes and skiffs, advertising itself as "the only industry in Lavallette," and possibly a fishery, that attracted Latvian and Norwegian families.⁴³

Ortley Beach

South of Chadwick and Ocean Beach lies Ortley Beach, named for Mitchell Ortley, an entrepreneur who came here in 1818. Ortley planned to re-establish a channel between Barnegat Bay and the Atlantic Ocean near where Cranberry Inlet had been, profiting from tolls charged to mariners passing through the channel. Unfortunately, his workmen completed the project only to watch the tide fill the channel by the next day.⁴⁴ Today Ortley Beach is part of Dover Township on the mainland, though perpetually attempting to become independent.⁴⁵

Seaside Heights

Release from the monotonous little cottages to the north is found in Seaside Heights and Seaside Park, the communities nearest Island Beach State Park. It was not until the twentieth century that the Manhasset Realty Company of Camden and Philadelphia began advertising what was to become Seaside Heights.⁴⁶ "The company offered 833 lots for

⁴⁰ McGorty, 1516-L3.

⁴¹ Jeanne M. Wenzel, ed., A History of Lavallette 1887-1977 (Lavallette, N.J.: Bicentennial Celebration Committee, 1977), 71.

⁴² Angott, "Lavallette Boasts."

⁴³ Angott, "Lavallette Boasts."

⁴⁴ Federal Writers' Project, 648.

⁴⁵ Kirk Moore, "Trapped," Asbury Park Press (October 30, 1988).

⁴⁶ Eleanor Angott, "Seaside Heights History," notes, (collection of Ocean County Historical Society), 3.

sale that first year (1909), and organized the first railroad excursion from Phila[delphia] on December 1 to promote the venture."⁴⁷ Known originally as North Seaside Park, Seaside Heights became an independent borough in 1913. The city soon began taking the form most visible today--its vast "bushels of bungalows and boarding houses piled seemingly one upon another."⁴⁸ As much as buildings or amusements, however, Seaside Heights was built on promotion, a form of Honky Tonk Bahbitry unique on the Jersey Shore, which has defined the character of this community for generations.

Though one local historian's claim that Seaside Heights contains the "greatest concentration of games and amusement rides in the world,"⁴⁹ seems like an exaggeration, "concentrated" is an accurate description. According to one article, "Seaside Heights: Bursts at Seams," the little town has over-extended itself. The "working white person's place" hosted a summer population of 60,000, a 50 percent increase over the regular winter population during its 1973 season.⁵⁰ Then a town of fourteen bars, the community had recently accepted a block-long club called Fat City. Planned as a resort from inception in the early twentieth century, Seaside Heights has been building up its boardwalk amusement reputation ever since. Besides the typical boardwalk concessions and games, Seaside Heights offers a slick modern waterslide and other up-to-date activities. Buried within all the dynamic modern rides and surrounded by video arcades, the Floyd L. Moreland Carousel at Casino Pier preserves a Victorian experience. Though the majority of the carousel was built in 1910, several of the fifty-eight hand-carved animals date to the 1890s. The menagerie includes two camels, a lion, tiger and donkey, along with the expressive horses, all rotating to the music of "the only continuously operating Wurlitzer Military Band Organ in the state."⁵¹ With its people-jammed commercial boardwalk, Seaside Heights contrasts sharply with low-key Mantoloking and Bay Head, and Ocean Beach to the north.

Seaside Park

The southern portion of the Barnegat Peninsula, just above what is now Island Beach State Park, was the first area inhabited on the Peninsula. Originally the land was an island, separated from the Barnegat peninsula by Cranberry Inlet, before the latter was filled in with sand by an 1812 storm. Called Sandtown for a time, the first building was

⁴⁷ Angott, "Seaside Heights History", 3.

⁴⁸ Rich Youmans, "The Diamond Jubilee of Seaside Heights," Coast (July 1988), 9.

⁴⁹ C. Byron Wortman, The First Fifty: A Biographical History of Seaside Heights, New Jersey (Seaside Heights, N.J.: 1963), 3.

⁵⁰ Rod Norland, "Seaside Heights Bursts at Seams," The Philadelphia Inquirer (29 July 1973), 1J.

⁵¹ Floyd L. Moreland, "The Carousel: A Piece of American History at the Jersey Shore," (Seaside Heights: By the Author, 1989), n.p.

erected in the 1860s or 1870s by Isaac Jennings, the first settler.⁵² In the early 1870s a life-saving station was opened at what became Ocean Boulevard and Decatur Street, where it still stands. Initially, most of the land was owned by the Giberson family, which sold it to two buyers who unsuccessfully tried to develop the area. Philadelphia brothers by the name of Bouwd purchased the north half around 1874. They named the plot Park City, for trees they hoped would grow in the dry sand to create "a seaside park." "This venture proved a failure as the trees from the mainland died after being transplanted," wrote a local historian, "thus remained only the name, Seaside Park."⁵³

By 1876 the 300 southern acres were controlled by a religious group, the Seaside Park Baptist Association. Seaside Park was originally envisioned as "a place of rest and ease at moderate expense and free from the hlighting influences of immorality, drunkenness and Sabbath desecration."⁵⁴ In 1878 the Seaside Park Hotel was completed and another, the Franklin, being built.⁵⁵ Probably because of the lack of efficient transportation routes, the resort failed to attract converts, and by the end of the decade the association's property was sold at a "sheriff's auction."⁵⁶ Virtually all of the property was purchased by Thomas Kennedy,⁵⁷ who laid out a grid of streets. Soon after, the Philadelphia and Long Branch railroad reached across Barnegat Bay and north to Bay Head, and real development began. New hotels included the Berkeley, which was burned or demolished early in the twentieth century. The Hiawatha Hotel had served as the Maryland pavilion at the 1876 Philadelphia exposition. It was partly dismantled, brought overland to Toms River, and floated by barge to Seaside Park. It burned in the twentieth century. The Manhasset, once the Seaside Park, now offered "150 rooms, barber shops, laundry, pool, shuffleboards, elevator, electric lights, artisan well water, long distance telephone, tennis courts and golf."⁵⁸ A yacht club was opened in 1899. A new Union church was built and shared among blacks and whites and Catholic and Protestant denominations.⁵⁹

⁵² "History: Seaside Park up to 1910," Seaside Park's Sunshine News (Seaside Park N.J.: December 1948), 2.

⁵³ Eleanor Angott, "Seaside Park 2," notes about Seaside Park (Collection of Ocean County Historical Society, n.d.).

⁵⁴ Ocean County Yearbook, 151.

⁵⁵ H.C. Woolman and T.F. Rose, Historical and Biographical Atlas of the New Jersey Coast (Philadelphia: Woolman and Rose, 1878; reprint. Toms River, N.J.: Ocean County Historical Society, 1985), 35.

⁵⁶ McGorty, 2.

⁵⁷ Eleanor Angott, "Early Inhabitants and Owners" (Toms River N.J.: unedited text for Ocean County Review, n.d., collection of Ocean County Historical Society), n.p.

⁵⁸ "Grand Hotel--1875 Style," Ocean County Review Supplement, Seaside Park's 75th Anniversary (Seaside Park N.J.: 1973, n.d., Collection of Ocean County Historical Society), 16A.

⁵⁹ "History: Seaside Park," 6.

Early in the twentieth century, there were four fisheries located at Seaside Park's south end: the Seaside Park, Hiering, Spring Lake, and United. "The fisheries were able to ship fish and other sea produce by truck to the mainland, sometimes averaging as much as twenty loads a day and often exchanging their fish for the mainland's farm produce."⁶⁰ Meanwhile, the Colonial and Park theaters were built.⁶¹ On Grand Central Avenue, Charles Hankins & Sons began building boats in 1912.

Though many older homes remain, in the twentieth century the automobile turned Seaside Park into a strip undistinguishable from the rest of the Barnegat peninsula resorts. Behind the strip Seaside Park is more residential in character than commercial Seaside Heights, however. There are many Queen Anne and Shingle style buildings from the Victorian era between First and Tenth avenues, including 504 5th Ave., which is covered in weathered wood shingles.

Island Beach State Park

Within miles of the Seaside Heights boardwalk, Island Beach State Park seems centuries distant. Despite the fenced dunes, parking lots, restrooms and paths, parts of Island Beach recall a New Jersey before summer resorts and even fishing fleets. Tangled holly bushes, scrub pines and winding vines form canopies over the sandy openings leading to the ocean. During the 1920s, this section of the barrier island was slated for resort development by Henry C. Phipps, a wealthy Pittsburgh businessman and partner of Andrew Carnegie. Phipps' plans for a successful seaside resort were cut short by the stock market crash of 1929 and his death two years later. The Phipps estate owned the land until it became a state park in 1953.⁶²

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Summer 1991

Sources: Angott, Eleanor. "Early Inhabitants and Owners." Toms River N.J.: unedited text for Ocean County Review. Collection of Ocean County Historical Society, n.d.

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⁶⁰ McGorty, vol. 4, "Seaside Park," 3.

⁶¹ "The Movies--A Historical Past." Ocean County Review Supplement, Seaside Park's 75th Anniversary, (Toms River, N.J.: n.d., Collection of Ocean County Historical Society), 4A.

⁶² Island State Beach Park, n.p.

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Project Information:

This project was sponsored by the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail (NJCHT) of the National Park Service, Janet Wolf, director. The documentation was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Robert Kapsch, chief, under the direction of HABS historian Sara Amy Leach,

project supervisor. Three historians completed the research during summer 1991: Field supervisor Sarah Allaback (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Alfred Holden (University of Vermont), and Camille Gatz (North Carolina). David Ames (University of Delaware) made the large-format photographs. Historian, Elizabeth Harris May (George Washington University), edited the HABS reports.